



United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

# Public Information Office

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## NEWS RELEASE

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## Seattle Bar Honors Ninth Circuit Senior Judge Betty Binns Fletcher

**SEATTLE** – The King County Bar Association has bestowed its highest award for a member of the bench to Senior Circuit Judge Betty Binns Fletcher of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Judge Fletcher was presented with the William L. Dwyer Outstanding Jurist Award at the bar association's annual banquet, held June 21 in Seattle. Ninth Circuit Chief Judge Mary M. Schroeder made the presentation, calling Judge Fletcher richly deserving of the honor after more than 50 years in the legal profession.

"In connection with the core values, I have known that Betty would always be there," Judge Schroeder said of her longtime colleague. "She always has been, and so far as I can tell, will probably be there forever."

The award, named for the late Judge William L. Dwyer of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington, recognizes lifetime achievement in the legal field and outstanding service as a judge on a court having jurisdiction in King County. Judge Fletcher has chambers in Seattle and sits on appellate panels hearing cases there and elsewhere in the Ninth Circuit.

Judge Fletcher was nominated to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals by President Carter and confirmed by the Senate in 1979. She served as an active circuit judge until 1998, when she assumed senior status. She has continued to hear cases and serve the court in other capacities since then. Her noteworthy opinions include questions of civil rights, women's rights, free speech and religion clauses of the First Amendment, legal ethics, securities law and others.

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A native of Tacoma, Judge Fletcher attended Stanford University on a scholarship, receiving her undergraduate degree in 1943. She received her LL.B. from the University of Washington School of Law, graduating first in her class in 1956. Over 23 years in private practice, she was a pioneer for women in law, becoming the first woman partner in one of Seattle's biggest law firms, Preston, Thorgrimson, Ellis, Holman & Fletcher; the first woman president of a major bar association, the King County Bar Association; and the first woman governor of the Washington State Bar Association.

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals hears appeals of cases decided by federal trial courts or state courts in Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington, plus the U.S. Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. In 2006, the court reported 13,828 appeals filed.

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